

from working as a team to achieve a great goal. Under the leadership of head coach Moe Fritz and assistant coach Lesley Weaver, the team—Aly Presswood, Amber Tramp, Kirsten Shortridge, Becca Byers, Brittany Cusumano, Kori Pickowitz, Michele Huffman, Kylie King, Erin McNally, Adria Park, Kati Pickowitz, Tiffanie Boone, Alisha Rams, Erin Hinojosa, Hayley Siebman, Sara LaSala, Maria Levasseur—has demonstrated the essence of the American spirit.

It is with great honor that I stand here today to recognize this group of individuals who have made their community so proud. It is this dedication and perseverance that is personified by these women that makes us certain that the future is bright for our nation and for our communities.

RECOGNIZING AMBASSADOR
RASTISLAV KACER

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 8, 2005

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Rastislav Kacer, the Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the United States and welcome him to the Fifth Congressional District of Missouri. Ambassador Kacer has the distinct honor of representing one of America's closest allies. This new democracy dates back to 1993 when Slovakia peacefully seceded from Czechoslovakia in what has become known as the "Velvet Divorce." Since the beginning of the war in Iraq, the Slovak Republic has fought by our side, joining the United States under flags of red, white and blue.

Ambassador Kacer's legacy is entrenched in his efforts to promote the Slovak Republic's stature in the world and at home. He served as Director General of the Division of International Organizations and Security Policy at the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As State Secretary with the Ministry of Defense, he was instrumental in obtaining full membership for the Slovak Republic in NATO and the European Union. He was appointed Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the United States in July 2003 and on September 8, 2003 was named Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Republic to the United States of America.

During his first visit to the Fifth Congressional District of Missouri, the Ambassador will participate in the 20th Anniversary of the Sugar Creek Slavic Festival promoting our country's rich Slavic heritage. This is a wonderful opportunity to experience the rich traditions and cultural customs of the beautiful mountainous region now known as the Slovak Republic. The festival will feature ethnic dancing, including the polka, folk singing, and Slovakian music.

The Ambassador's agenda includes meetings with civic, business and community leaders, fostering new partnerships and renewing old initiatives. They will explore trade and cultural exchange between the heartland of the United States and the geographic heart of Europe, the Slovak Republic.

Mr. Speaker, please join with me in expressing our appreciation to Ambassador Rastislav Kacer and the Slovak Republic. This new democratic republic has gained world-

wide stature through membership in NATO and continues to grow in world recognition as they preserve their identity through culture and heritage. In Sugar Creek, and all around Missouri's Fifth Congressional District, Slovakian immigrants celebrate their roots with new generations, linking America's heartland to the heart of Europe. By preserving our past, we will foster an understanding for the future. I ask my colleagues to join me today in paying tribute to the Slovak Republic and its Ambassador, Rastislav Kacer.

TRIBUTE TO MR. STEVE PACZOLT
OF LA GRANGE, IL

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 8, 2005

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to an outstanding community leader in my district, Mr. Steve Paczolt, who recently completed 12 years of service with the Park District of La Grange's Board of Commissioners.

A lifelong resident of La Grange, Mr. Paczolt has helped guide the tremendous growth and improvements the Park District has enjoyed, including the community's recent approval for the construction of a new indoor recreation facility. Steve's community involvement and service goes well beyond his dedication to providing recreation opportunities for his fellow residents. He has served as leader in innumerable other organizations, including: the Rich Port YMCA Board; the H-Foundation, which raises funds for brain cancer research; the Arts and Business Council of Chicago; the Illinois Association of Park Districts; Stage Left Theater Board; the Theatre Building of Chicago Board; the Western Springs Police Department as an Auxiliary Officer; the La Grange Business Association; and West Suburban Chamber of Commerce.

Steve has also found the time to build a thriving insurance and financial services business in the community. He specializes in insuring theatrical productions and musical concerts. He has worked with some of the biggest names in show business, yet he still treats every one of his customers like a superstar. He has also served his profession as an active member of the Independent Insurance Agents of Illinois, including serving on the Education and Government Affairs and Federal Legislative committees.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in a salute to Steve Paczolt for his great service on the Park District of La Grange Board, as well as for his lifetime of dedication and service to the community of La Grange. I give him my best wishes for many more years of giving back to his community.

TRIBUTE TO KARL WALKES

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 8, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Karl Walkes for his contributions to the public school system and noble service in the community.

Karl Walkes was born in Brooklyn, New York. He is the fourth of Fitz and Eileen's seven children. He grew up in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn and attended the New York City public schools. After graduating from the Brooklyn High School of Automotive Trades, Mr. Walkes was introduced to Zeke Clement, a charismatic community leader and legendary basketball coach. Through the effort of Mr. Clement, he was awarded an athletic scholarship to Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia where he pursued a teaching career in elementary education.

At Virginia Union University, Mr. Walkes was greatly impressed with the accessibility of the University President, Rev. Dr. Samuel D. Proctor. He watched Dr. Proctor assist students in resolving difficult problems. Most notably, conversations with Dr. Proctor and Mr. Clement inspired him to devote his adult life to helping community youth to embrace their intellect, in order to obtain the unlimited resources that are available to them.

After receiving a Bachelors Degree and completing a tour of duty in the United States Army, Mr. Walkes began a teaching career in Brooklyn at the historic Weeksville Elementary School (P.S. 243). He continued his education by completing the Master's Degree course of study programs in Elementary Education at Brooklyn College and the Administration Supervision program at The City College of New York. He worked at the historic Weeksville Elementary School for more than 32 years, serving as teacher, Dean and Assistant Principal. He has often remarked, "I knew retirement was near when the offspring of past students began registering for kindergarten and completing the sixth grade."

After retirement from the Board of Education in 1995, Mr. Walkes joined the community-based Jackie Robinson Center, JRC, after-school program full-time under the leadership of Mr. Zeke Clement. The Jackie Robinson Center, JRC, for Physical Culture, which focuses on the improvement of student academic skills, sought to encourage participation in academic, sports and cultural activities. At the JRC, Mr. Walkes functioned as the program's sports and cultural director.

His memberships and affiliation over the years include: Brooklyn USA Athletic Association Inc., Council of School Supervisors and Administrators, CSA, Retired School Supervisors and Administrators, RSSA, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Committee to Honor, NAACP, Tournament of Champions, Trustee of Community School Board District No. 16 and the St. John's Flashes.

He has received awards from: Community School District No. 16 "Teacher of the Year"; Boy Scouts of America; Jackie Robinson Center for Physical Culture; Brooklyn USA Athletic Association Inc.; National Old Timers Clubs Inc.; and Parents of the Weeksville School.

Mr. Walkes is married to Verniece Shiver Walkes. They have one son, Kevin, and presently reside in East Flatbush. He is grateful for Rev. Dr. Samuel D. Proctor and Mr. Zeke Clement who taught him through example that we must work diligently with our youth, for they are the most valuable resource that we have. Mr. Speaker, we in turn acknowledge his commitment and contributions today.